

Message Text

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TO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

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PASS WILSON AND CARLIN

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TAGS: SREF, UNHCR, VS

SUBJECT: NY TIMES STORY ON REPATRIATES

1. FOLLOWING ARTICLE APPEARED IN THIS MORNING'S EDITION OF NY TIMES (P. 2) UNDER HEADLINE QUOTE SAIGON SAID TO FEAR RETURNEES WILL INCLUDE AMERICAN AGENTS UNQUOTE.

2. BEGIN QUOTE GENEVA - OCTOBER 6 - THE RELUCTANCE OF SOUTH VIETNAM'S PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW 2,000 VIETNAMESE REFUGEES TO RETURN IS BEING ATTRIBUTED HERE IN PART TO FEARS THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD SEND AGENTS INTO THE COUNTRY AMONG THE RETURNEES.

3. QUOTE ACCORDING TO INTERNATIONAL OFFICIALS FAMILIAR WITH REFUGEE PROBLEMS, SAIGON'S OPPOSITION ALSO STEMS FROM ITS OBJECTION TO WHAT IT SEES AS AN ATTEMPT BY WASHINGTON TO FORCE IT TO ACCEPT THE REFUGEES.

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4. QUOTE THIS IS A REFERENCE TO THE AMERICAN DECISION TO ALLOW 1,600 REFUGEES TO GO BACK TO SOUTH VIETNAM FROM GUAM ABOARD A REFITTED SHIP, HOPING THAT THEY WILL BE WELCOME ONCE THEY ARRIVE.

5. QUOTE LAST MAY, THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT ASKED THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, PRINCE SADRUDDIN AGA KHAN, FOR ASSISTANCE IN ORGANIZING THE REPATRIATION OF THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEES. THE COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE HERE HAS REGISTERED THE NAMES OF 2,000 WHO WISH TO RETURN AND HAS SUBMITTED THEM TO SAIGON.

6. QUOTE HOWEVER, DURING A VISIT TO NORTH VIETNAM LATE LAST MONTH, THE COMMISSIONER WAS TOLD BY SOUTH VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS THAT QUOTE PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS UNQUOTE RULED OUT REFUGEE REPATRIATION AT THE MOMENT. BECAUSE OF THE MANY ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS FACING SAIGON'S COMMUNIST AUTHORITIES, REPATRIATION DOES NOT COMMAND HIGH PRIORITY, ACCORDING TO OFFICIALS HERE.

7. QUOTE NEVERTHELESS THE PRINCE WAS ASSURED, ACCORDING TO THESE OFFICIALS, THAT THE SAIGON GOVERNMENT HAD NOT RENOUNCED THE PRINCIPLE OF REPATRIATION. THE MATTER IS TO BE DISCUSSED AGAIN, THE COMMISSIONER SAYS, WHEN HE VISITS SAIGON LATER THIS YEAR AT THE GOVERNMENT'S INVITATION. END QUOTE.

8. WE PROPOSE TO RESPOND TO POSSIBLE INQUIRIES BY SAYING QUOTE REPORTED FEARS ARE GROUNDLESS, END QUOTE AS CLEARED BY ALL CONCERNED. KISSINGER

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